

A Further
PROSPECT
OF THE
Cafe in View,
IN
ANSWER
TO SOME
New Objections
Not There Considered.

L O N D O N :

Printed, and Sold at the Publishing-Office,
in Bearbinder-Lane, near Stocks-Market,
and by most Booksellers in Lon-
don and Westminster. 1707.



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XXI.

A Further

PROSPECT

OF THE

CASE in View, &c.

Honoured Sir,

I Am glad to find you qualified for the Enquiry on which you are pleased to employ me, with a Commendable Favour to *Peace*. Our Blessed Lord has intitled it to a *Beatitude*. Meaning it, no doubt, no otherwise than as it is consistent with our other Duties to *Truth*, and the *Inter-*

A Favour
for *Peace*,
commend-
able in
this Dis-
pute, as con-
sistent with
other Du-
ties.

B rests

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rests of the Catholick Church ;
and, I can assure you, that
I am heartily ready to join
Issue on these Terms, which
are the only Solid Foundations
for a Commendable and a
Lasting Peace. The Favour I
mean is no other than such
as may oblige us to deter-
mine rather for Peace, where
there is not more certain E-
vidence against it, nor any
more important Duties that
are Inconsistent with it. I am
therefore to examine whe-
ther there be either of these
Reasons in the Pleas you
insist on, that can hinder
our Coalition with our for-
mer Fathers and Brethren
whenever it shall please
God that the Case in View shall
happen ? That is, when the
Sees of our Holy Fathers
shall

shall be fairly vacated by the Death, or Cession of the Rightful Owners?

I begin, as your self do, with your later Suggestion. The rather, because it has the nearer Affinity with the Question debated in my Book, and will admit of the easier Resolution on the Principles there already established. You conceive therefore that after the Vacancy of all our Sees, though there remain no Schism in England, yet there will still remain a Schism from other Bishops in Communion with our Holy Fathers. And you instance particularly in the Bishops of Scotland. But, if you will be pleased to recollect what I have already said in my Discourse concerning the

2.
There can
be no
Schism of
our Church-
es from o-
ther Foreign
Bishops,
when we
have only
Single un-
rivalled Al-
ters in the
particular
Jurisdicti-
ons.

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Case in View, you will find
that I have obviated this
Objection. I have there
shewn that the *Schism* from
the *Catholick Church* diffusive
results from the *Schism* from
a *particular Church*, as Separa-
tion from the *Communion* of a
Particular Church obliges the
Church in Heaven to reject all
from the *Heavenly and Archi-
typal Union* and *Communion*,
who are any way divided
from its *Authorized Represen-
tative* here on *Earth*; and as
Persons so excluded from the
Heavenly Communion do there-
by lose all *Right* to all *Earthly*
Communions, if the *Governors* of
such *other Communions* will in-
deed maintain a *Communion*
with *Heaven*, without which
their *Acts* on *Earth* can ex-
pect no *Ratification* in *Heaven*;
thence

thence it plainly follows, that where there is no Separation from the *Local Church*, the *Right* to the *Cœlestiai Union* and *Communion* is still retained. Which will consequently intitle the Person, so *communicating* with *Heaven*, to a *Right* to *Communion* with all those *Earthly Churches*, which are of the *same Communion* with the *Church-Power* of the *Jurisdiction* to which the *Communicant* does particularly belong. When therefore there is no *Altar against Altar* in *England*, how can there be any *Separation* in *England*? How then can any *Communicant* in *England* fail of the *Benefits* of the *Mystical Communion* in *Heaven*, when he is not separated from that *Communion* which

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can alone pretend, in *Eng-*
land, to represent God and
Christ, as having *visible Heads*
and *Principles of Unity*? And
which is otherwise qualified
for that *Mystical Union*, by be-
ing true to all the *Primitive*
and *Original Fundamentals*?
And how can any other
Church, that believes the
Church of England so qualifi-
ed, refuse her *Communion* to our
Church's Communicants, when
she cannot deny them to
have a *Right to the Cœlestia*
Communion, if *Christ* have any
Church at all in *England*?
It will be a *virtual Renoun-*
cing her own *Interest* in the
Heavenly Communion, if any
Church should reject from
her own *Communion* those
whom she has *reason* to be-
lieve entitled to the *Cœlestia*.
Nor

Nor could she reasonably expect that her own *Acts* should be ratified in *Heaven*, if she should refuse to ratifie the *Acts* of the *Heavenly Communion* here on *Earth*. And *Encroachment* on *Jurisdictions* already possessed must needs make the *Schism* imputable to the *Encroachers*, where the common *Faith* is already secure. Nor can any *Domes-tick Schism* be pretended, where there is no more than one *Altar* in *England*. Nor can there consequently be any *Schism* from any *Foreign Church* on the *Principle* now mentioned: That all *Schism* from *Foreign Churches* must be fundamentally grounded on a *Schism* from the *Jurisdiction* to which the *Schismatick* belongs, and the *Right*

*A Further Prospect of
that Church has to oblige all
Foreign Churches to ratifie
whatever is necessary for
asserting her own Right within
in her own Jurisdiction.*

3.
We cannot
oblige our
Adversary-
Bishops to
make a
Publick Sa-
tisfaction
for what
they have
done in re-
lation to
the Schism,
when we
have no Bi-
shops of our
own.

But you conceive *Satisfa-
ction* necessary as a previous
*Condition for renewing our Com-
munion* with those who have
been the *Authors* of the pre-
sent *Schism*. No doubt it
were much to be wished, to use
the *Words* of our own *Church*
in a like *Case*; and that,
not for *Retrospection* only, but
also for *asserting* the *Rights*
of the *Church*, and *preventing*
the like *Schisms* for the *future*.
Nor would our *Adversaries*
themselves *desire* the *Reunion*
on *other Terms*, if they had
indeed that bare *Zeal* for our
common *Mother*, and her *Sp-
iritual Interests*, and the *revival*
of

of Discipline, which our Church has expressed in the Words now mentioned. They would, to chuse, lay hold on the present Occasion to make up the Breach themselves have made, on such Honourable Terms as might prevent their unjustifiable Practice from passing into a Precedent, and secure the Church against the like Laical Encroachments for the future. They might have done so without concerning the State Controversie in the Reconciliation, by healing the Breach of Communion, yet leaving us under the same Incapacity of Secular Favours as before. But let us leave them to answer, for this Omission, to God and their own Consciences. Our present Enquiry is

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is concerning our *own Duty* in the *Case in View*. And, be pleased to remember that, when that shall be our *Case*, we shall all be then in the **Condition of private Communicants**, who cannot pretend to any *Right* to give *Laws of Communion*, but must be obliged to receive them, from those who have the *Power of the Sacraments*, if we will have any *Communion* at all. *Penance*, and *Publick Satisfaction*, must be *imposed* (if they be *imposed* at all) as *Conditions of Communion*. They can therefore be *imposed* by none but those who have the *Power of that Communion*, which may claim a *Right* to be *ratified in Heaven*. This none but *Bishops* can pretend to, as I have already shewn on

on several Occasions. We cannot therefore *presume* to *impose* any *Conditions* on our *Adversary-Bishops*, when we our selves have *no Bishops* that may exercise *Authority* over them. We cannot do it, even over the *Laity*, much less shall we be able to do it over them who have *more Spiritual Authority* than we our selves can pretend to, when we have *no Bishops* to *Head us*, and to *Form us into a Communion*. We may intreat them to do *Justice* on *themselves*, as *Synods* are said to have done with the Popes *Marcellinus* and *Symmachus*; but, if they will not be *perswaded* to do it, God will not make *us* *responsible* for them, though they should *not* make the *Satisfaction* *desired*.

fired. But he may make us responsible, if we *continue* an opposite *Communion*, when we have no sufficient *Authority* to do so; or if we do not *reunite* our selves to our present *Adversaries* when *Providence* shall have invested *them* with the *Canonical Authority* of the *Jurisdictions* within which we *live*. Nor will you, I believe, find One Parallel Instance for your Purpose in our Reverend and Learned Brother's *Historical Collections*. The *Catholick Orthodox Christians* had their *own Bishops* in all the *Cases* mentioned by you, of the *Novatians*, and *Donatists*, and *St Chrysostom*. This might *justify* their keeping up a *distinct Communion*; but will not then be pleadable by *us*, in the

the Case we speak of, when we shall have no Bishops of our Communion in our National Church.

I may add farther, That tho' Satisfaction be a thing desirable for the Discipline of the Church, and the more effectual securing the Church from the Contagion of Bad Examples for the future, yet it has never, that I know of, been insisted on as an Essential to a Coalition; no, nor as generally prudent, or fit to be insisted on, as a Condition of Reconciliation. *Themistocles* was for making a Bridge of Silver for a flying Enemy. And Multitudes of Precedents have been in both Societies, the Secular as well as the Sacred, wherein Motions for Peace have been readily accepted by

4. Making
Publick Sa-
tisfaction,
for what
has been
done under
the Schism,
is not essen-
tial to a
Reconcilia-
tion.

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by the Supreme Powers without any dishonourable Conditions that might put the Violaters of Unity to the Blush for any thing past, but have left them accountable for what was now out of their Power to none but God, and their own Conscience. The Catholicks, at the Collation of Carthage, insisted on nothing but that, for the future, both Bodies might be under one Bishop, who might Communicate with the Catholick Church, by giving Communicatory Letters to, and receiving them from the Body of their Episcopal Collegues of the Church diffusive. They required no Penitential Acknowledgment of what had been done amiss before, as in the Case of Private Penitents. So, in the Case

Case of S. Chrysostom, nothing more was done that might reflect on his Rivals, but what was necessary for doing Justice to his Memory. His Adversaries had expunged his Name out of the Ecclesiastical *Diptychs*. This was taken for an Ecclesiastical Excommunication of the deceased. It could therefore have been hardly consistent with the Reconciliation intended of the Two Communions, if the Name of that injured Saint had not been restored into those same *Diptychs*, how much soever it might seem to reflect on those who had expunged it. Nor were any harder Terms insisted on. No Retrospection into the Validity of the Acts of the Time of his Deprivation, much less any

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any Acknowledgment or Satisfaction for them. Other Examples I have given in my Book, and might have added more if it had been necessary. This was indeed the ordinary Way of treating *Bishops of equal, or superiour Authority*, with that which was concerned against them. *Bishops* were so far from being subjected to Ecclesiastical Penance ordinarily, that, if they ever had undergone the Office of *Penitents*, that Consideration alone was, by the Canons of those Times, sufficient to make them incapable of that Divine Office of the Supreme Priesthood. It was therefore very ordinary, upon *Reconciliations*, to receive Persons in Office (much more of this Supreme of

of all Ecclesiastical Offices) in the same Dignity they had enjoyed in their *separate Communion*; or to qualifie them for the next convenient *Vacancy*. Then especially, when it was safe to *trust* them, and when they had received their Power from Persons duly *qualified* to give it them. But generally without any *dishonourable* Circumstances that I remember of. Especially after the *IVth Century*, wherein the *First Canons*, now extant, were made, as has long since been observed by *S. Isidore of Sevil*. That shews that he knew of none elder then. The *Discipline* exercised on the *Ordainers of Novatian* was before those incapacitating *Canons*. However I know

C not

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not One Instance of *Penance*
imposed on *Adversary Bishops* when the *Orthodox Bishops* were the *fewer*, which
is our present *Case*. But
the *Reasoning* will be yet
more unquestionable when
the whole *Colledge* of our *Bishops*
of the *National Church*
shall be *united* against us.
Then we can have no *Pre-
tence* on their *undertaking*
the *Persons* of *Publick Peni-
tents* as a *Condition* of their
Reconciliation. Nor can you,
I believe, produce One sin-
gle *Precedent* for it, even
from the *Times* of the *severest
Discipline*. This therefore
can be no *Ground* for *For-
eigners* to *intermeddle* in
our *Affairs*, nor for us to *fa-
vour* them in doing so.

I proceed now to your other Objection, which, I confess, I never looked on as sufficient to justifie a Separation of Communion. It relates to [the Prayers used in the Publick Offices to which we cannot heartily say Amen. I was aware of this in the Offices concerning Oates's Plot, even after sufficient Evidence had appeared, that the Testimony of him, and such as he was, could not be relied on as an Argument of the Truth of what had been deposited by them. Yet the Offices then imposed generally supposed the Truth of it. And the Prayers then offered were for Things not desirable. But upon that Supposition, must we therefore, even then have been obliged

^{s.}
All Prayers
in Church-
Offices to
which we
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sent, do not
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Church's
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Not even
all such as
are False or
Immoral,
when nei-
ther the
Church, nor
the Commu-
nicants, can
be justly
blamed for
them.

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to separate from those Prayers, and the whole Communion wherein they were used, when we were satisfied that the Witnesses did not deserve credit, that their Narratives were otherwise *unlikely* and *inconsistent*, and that the Petitions desired, pursuant to the Belief of them, were therefore *needless* and *unseasonable*, as grounded on *false* Suggestions? Could we have been *excuseable* if we had done so? I may put the Case yet higher. It is very possible that a private Person may *know* that to be *certainly false* which the Imposers of the Publick Prayers may, upon *probable* Evidence, believe *true*. As if the Fact concern *himself*, or any other who was with him

him when the Fact is said to have been committed; or, if he know some Circumstances *unknown* to the *Imposers*; which, being known, prove the Fact *impossible*. Must that oblige him to withdraw from the *Communion* which uses those *Prayers* which suppose that *true* which he himself *knows* to be *impossible*, for fear of the *Sin of a Lie*, if he say *Amen* to such *Prayers*; or the *Sin of Scandal*, by being *presumed* to have *assented* to such *Prayers*, because of his *Presence* at them, though he did not say *Amen* to them? Either of those *Sins*, of the *Lie*, or the *Scandal*, will make the *Communion* unlawful to him if your *Reasoning* be solid and conclusive. How-

C 3 ever,

ever, in these Instances there are only *Errors* in Matters of *Fact*, though *known* to be *Errors*, and therefore *voluntary*. But neither false *Doctrine*, nor *unlawful Prayers*, in the Opinion of the *Church*, whose *Communion* the Person we speak of is supposed to *own*. I give another Instance, wherein there is *both*, which is certainly of *more Consequence* than where the *Errors* relate only to Matters of *Fact*, whether the *Falshoods* be alike *known* or *wilful*. In the Reign of King James II. we used that Petition in the *Litany*, That God would *keep and strengthen him in the true Worship*. And we were upbraided for it by the *Papists*, pretending, that we doing so,

own

own his Popery, then professed by him to be the *true worshipping of God*; and that we pray'd God to *keep and strengthen him in it*. And undoubtedly this *Petition* was designed for a *Prince* whose *Worship* the *Church* believed *true*; such as the *Prince* was when the *Litany* was composed; and ought to have been altered when the *Case* was altered. That is, when the *Prince* was *not* such as that was whom the *Compilers* of the *Litany* had in their *View*, and for whose use that *Petition* was truly calculated. But to use it for a *Prince*, openly professing another *Faith*, and another *Communion*, is as contrary to her *Faith* as it was beside her *Design*. This therefore will

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go farther to justifie a *Separation*, as Errors in *Faith* are more considerable for that Purpose than Errors only relating to *Fact* and *Practice* can be. What then? Ought we therefore, even *then*, to have *begun* our *Separation* from the *Publick Assemblies*? No, certainly. We could not have done it without very great *Injustice*. It was very certain that none of our *Church*'s true *Communicants* could *believe* these Expressions *true* in the *Sense* in which our *Adversaries* are pleased to *upbraid* us with them, how *Literally* soever, or how *Naturally*, that *Sense* might seem to be *imported* by them as they were *used* in *that* *Prince*'s *Reign*. It is certain that the *Church* her

her self could not approve them, if she would be true to her own *Doctrine*, and even her own *Communion*. Must she therefore separate from her self? Or, was she also guilty of *Immoral* and *Inconsistent* *Prayers* if she did not do so? It is certain that those same *Words*, by the *Change* of the *Prince*, had acquired a *different*, nay, a *contrary Sense* to the *Sense intended* by the first *Compilers* of those same *Petitions*. And can it be *just*, or even *fair*, to charge the *Church* with a *Sense* notoriously *contrary* to that *Sense* which was *really* her own *Sense*; and to *separate* from her *Communion* for so *false* an *Imputation*? It is certain that the *Sense* imported by those same *Words*, in

in that Change of Circumstances, was such as could not be intended by any of our Church's Communicants, if they would be true to the Principles of her Communion. Must they therefore separate from her Communion for a Sense of her Prayers which they could not own for her Sense if they would reason consequently to the Principles of that same Communion? Or, must they be guilty of Immoral Falshoods, by continuing in her Communion if they do not understand those same Words in a Sense quite contrary to what her self meant when she compiled those same Prayers? Where is indeed the Scandal of seeming to approve that new Sense, when there is no other Argument to prove even their

their seeming to approve it but that only one, that they continue in the Communion, when it is withal notorious that none of their Brethren, of the same Communion, either do, or can, approve of that same Sense, notwithstanding their continuing in it? Where is the Falshood, when those Words, in the new Sense, though blamed by them, as being judged false, are notwithstanding no otherwise understood or approved by them than they are and must be by their Fellow-Communicants? These are they to whose Understanding they are obliged to accommodate themselves, if they will indeed approve their Veracity as to the Terms on which they

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continue in the Communion.* If therefore they *continued* in the Communion on the same Terms which were *expected* by their Governors, and *presumed* by their Brethren of the same Communion, who thought no otherwise of these Prayers than themselves did, I know no Ground of Scruple but that their continuing *then* in our Communion was very *consistent* with what could reasonably be expected from their *Veracity*.

It was, no doubt, intended
 6.
 It will not be justifiable for Private Communicants, to forbear our Church's Communion, on Account of such Prayers. (as is usual where it may be done) that, upon the Change of the Person prayed for, the Prayers also should be changed which are offered for him. And that, as well in the Petitions as in the Name. It is

is certain that a *Patron* of the same *Communion* is intitled to *Prayers* different from those which he can pretend to, who *openly* owns another *Communion*, and cannot be expected to be a *Patron* of the *Communion* that *prays* for him. But what must *private Communicants* do, in the *mean time*, till that *Change* be *made*, which is not in the *Power* of *private Communicants*, but only of the *Bishops*? They cannot cordially join in *Prayers* which suppose an *Approval* of an *opposite Faith*; much less in *Petitions* for *keeping* and *strengthening* a *Soul* in a *Belief* which themselves think *destructive* of his *Salvation*. These are certainly as *Immoral* as *Prayers* for the *Prosperity* of an *unjust Cause*.

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Cause. The *Cause* promoted by such *Prayers* is everyWay as *unjust* as the other. But with this further *Aggravation*, that, in the *One Case*, our *Civil Interests* alone are concerned *directly*: In the other those irreparable ones are hazarded, of our *Souls*, and of *Religion*. If therefore *Presence* at such *Prayers* would involve the *Communicant* in the *Guilt* of them, the *whole Communion* must be *deserted* by the *Reasoning* now insisted on. At least, till the *Governors* of the *Communion* shall *change the Prayers*. What then must a *Pious Person* do in the *mean time*? Must he *forbear* all *Worship* of *God* in the *Publick Assemblies* of any *Communion* whatsoever, till the desired *Change* can be effected?

fected? Even of that Communion which himself believes Orthodox in the *Faith*, and wherein he finds no opposite Altars that might warn him of any Danger of *Schism*? What if he finds no *Hopes* that they *will*, or *can*, be remedied for ever? Must he therefore forbear all Publick Worship for ever? That would be a *Remedy* worse than the *Evils* he would endeavour to avoid by such a *Separation*. It would be a *Dissolution* of the whole *Body* if *all* should have followed such an *Example*. And *all* are concerned *alike*, and can give the *same Reason* as any *one* can, why they should do so too. *All* are alike obliged to avoid *Immoral* and *Sinful Prayers*, as well

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well as he that should begin the Separation. And all that believe the Doctrine of the Church of England true, must, in Consequence of that Belief, think the Prayers Sinful and Immoral, that, in the obvious Sense of them, in that unhappy Prince's Reign, implied the contrary to what themselves believed. The Society being thus dissolved, there could, thenceforward, remain no Authority, by which the Grievance, so complained of, might be redressed. This would therefore be a greater Mischief to the Publick than any One Grievance whatsoever, that would, by necessary Consequence, make the Redress of all Grievances impossible, by destroying the Power that should redress them.

them. That Power can subsist no longer when the Body is dissolved, by the Union of which it is enabled to Act. This would also further involve all who occasioned the Dissolution in the Guilt of all the Grievances that may follow when the Power is destroyed by which they might otherwise have been prevented or amended. It will charge them also with a greater Guilt than that which they would pretend to avoid by avoiding the Communion, even in Regard of that very Particular for which they thought themselves obliged to avoid it. Had they borne with Prayers, (however fit to be reformed,) and kept up the Body and the Government of it;

D they

they might hope for the Reformation of the Prayers, either by a new change of the Case in an Orthodox Successor, or by a Canonical Alteration of the Forms, whenever the Church should retrieve the Reverence due to her Authority. But, by dissolving the Body, they would make the Reformation unpracticable, by destroying the Authority that should reform them. And it is certainly a greater Crime, to binder the Reformation of Immoral Prayers, than to bear with them for a time, till they may be regularly reformed by those who have the Right of reforming them. By bearing with such Forms, till they may be reformed regularly; they would not be responsible to God for intermeddling

meddling in a *Reformation*, for which God will not make them answerable, but their *Superiors*. But, in separating from their *Superiors*, when they cannot charge them either with *Schism* or *Heresie*, they violate their own *Duty*, for which they must undoubtedly expect that God will make *themselves* accountable. If this *Liberty* be allowed of separating for *Things impossible to be avoided*, no *Authority* settled by God can have any great *Influence* on *Conscience*, no *Society* founded by him can *keep* that *Authority*, nor can it long *subsist* without it. As *certainly* therefore as God has settled a *Spiritual Authority*, nor can it long *subsist* without it. As *certainly*

D 2 there-

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 therefore as God has settled
 a spiritual Authority coercive
 over Conscience, and founded
 a Privileged Society, and
 intended that both should
 be perpetual, and obliged all,
 in their Stations to maintain
 them so; so certain it is
 that he cannot be pleased with
 so frequent and easie Separati-
 ons which are so destructive
 of so momentous Designs for
 the Good of Mankind.

7.
 Nor to keep
 out of all
 Communion,
 or to join
 in any oppo-
 site Commu-
 nion in the
 same Di-
 stricts, on
 that same
 Account.

The same will appear
 further if you will be pleas-
 ed to consider the Consequen-
 ces of this Separation. One
 of these Two is, I think,
 unavoidable. Either they
 must perpetuate this Separa-
 tion, or join themselves
 with some other opposite
 Communion with the same
 Jurisdictions in which they
 live.

live. The former State is very uncomfortable, to be deprived of all Sacraments, and all the Ordinary Means appointed by God for Salvation. It leaves them only such Means as are Extraordinary and Uncovenanted. So that unless God do more than he has Promised or Covenanted to do, they cannot hope to attain the End, when they have deprived themselves of the Means by God appointed for it. Their Case would be worse than if they had lived in a Place where no Sacraments at all could be obtained. Their willingly abstaining from them where they may have them, if they please, will cut them off from that only Plea of Equity (which may

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intitle them to *Uncovenanted*
Favours) if they be not
very *sure* of the *Sin* of *conti-*
nuing in their *Original Com-*
munion, especially if they
should *die* in it. The doing
so without a very *great*,
and a very *evident* *Necessi-*
ty, is certainly a greater
Sin than can reasonably be
feared from the *Scandal ta-*
ken by others against their
Veracity, on account of their
Presence at those *Prayers*
which their *Fellow Communi-*
cants are known to *dislike* as
much as themselves can,
and sometimes may be
known to be *obliged* to dis-
like them, on Account of
avowed *Principles*. Their
Publick Duty to their *Commu-*
nion is more *Important*, and
therefore more *obliging* than
any

any Duty incumbent on them in their *Private* and *Personal Capacity*. This Consideration *alone* is sufficient to *excuse* them from their pretended *Obligation* to concern themselves for other Mens *Opinions* concerning their *Veracity* in a doubtful Case not *sinful*, whilst they are satisfied in their own *Consciences*, that they do not assent to *Immoral Prayers*. Especially whilst their Adversaries have no other Argument to prove their *Assent* besides a bare *Presumption*, grounded on their *Presence* at the *Communion*, and common *Offices*, where such *Prayers* are used. It is a Rule in such *Casuistry*, that, where *Two Duties* are *inconfident*, the *lower* ceases to be

*A Further Prospect of
a Duty, and the Omission of it
to be a Sin, when its Obser-
vation must necessarily occa-
sion the Violation of a greater
Duty to the Publick, which
ought to take Place before
Private Reputation hazarded
on groundless Pretences. Tho'
therefore we ought to take
Care to give no needless Of-
fence even to those without,
where no reason of greater
Moment obliges us to the
Thing, for which the Offence
is taken; yet where such a
Reason intervenes, (as this is
of preserving the Spiritual Soci-
ety,) there it is so far from
being a Sin, that it is indeed
our Duty to secure our Duty
to the Spiritual Society, what-
ever Offence be taken, either
by Adversaries, or even our
Brethren, for the Perfor-
mance*

mance of our greater Duty to our Spiritual Superiors, and for securing our greatest Interest by the ordinary Means prescribed by the Gospel for our *Salvation*, which cannot be secure in a Neglect of those ordinary Means, where they may be had without Violation of a more Important Duty. Must we therefore, for avoiding this intolerable *Inconvenience*, betake our selves to another *Communion*? We cannot do so, unless it be to a *Communion* that does not own the *Communion* of the *Church* destroyed by us, because no other *Church* can justifie her receiving our *Church's Excommunicates*. We cannot Communicate with any *Foreign Church* immediately, while we keep at *Home*. If there-

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therefore we will *Communicate* with any such *Foreign Church*, we can do it no otherwise than by *Communicating* with some *opposite Communion*, within our own *Jurisdictions*, which *owns* that *Foreign Communion*. This we *cannot* do if we will be *true* to our *Old Principles* on which we *first Communicated* with our own *Churches* in these *Dominions*. In *Communicating* with them we owned our selves *divided* from all *opposite Comunions* within the same *Jurisdictions*. And that on *Causes independent* on these *offensive Prayers*. Thence it will follow that the *Cause* of our *Secession* can make the *Cause* of such *opposite Communions* within the same

same *Jurisdictions* no better than it was before. If therefore we judged their Communion *Schismatical* before, we must do so still, and must be obliged to do so on the same *Principles* by which we judged them *Schismatical* before. Such *Prayers* used in our *first Communion* cannot make *Innovations* in the *Faith* lawful in any *opposite Communion* which had been guilty of it formerly. Nor can they *Legitimate* any *Sacrilegious Schismatical Authority*, though no *Prayers* be imposed *unfit* to be *assented* to for the sake of the *Matter*. This *Dispute* has not the same *Event* as many others have, where the *Injustice* of One *Cause* adds *Right* to the *other*, and makes

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makes the Subjects Duty manifest and unquestionable. Nor can they find any Communion in the World, when they may not find the like Pretence for Separation, if they will be scrupulous. If therefore they must bear with such Prayers, where-ever they go; why should they not rather bear with them in *that* Communion to which they were particularly obliged by their Baptism?

8.
Our Presence in the Communion, where such Prayers are used, is very consistent with a Guiltlessness of the Sin or Scandal of them.

A Petition of this Nature can certainly be no Sin of the Communion, because it is against the Principles of the Communion; Why then should the Communion be deserted for it? It is no Sin in the Communicant, because

he

he cannot be supposed to believe that *Faith* true, which is not *consistent* with the *Principles* of his *Communion*. And, if this be not supposed, there can be no *Inconsistency* pretended between his *Presence* at his *Petition*, and his *Belief*, that it is grounded on a *false Supposal*, and ought to be *amended*; How then can his *Presence* at it be reasonably judged *inconsistent* with his *Veracity*? There can be no *Scandal* given to the *Church*, or his *Brethren*, when they all profess *themselves* obliged to believe as he does, and and that by *Principles*: Which therefore they must think *themselves* obliged also to *expect* from him whilst he owns their *Communion* and

and *Principles*. Where then can be the *Disappointment*, when they know his true Meaning in *continuing* in their *Communion*, and find it no other than what *they*, and *he*, are obliged to *mean*, and that by their common *Principles*? How then can *they* charge him with any *Insincerity*, or *Failure* in his *Duty* to *Veracity*, for his *Communicating* with *them*, when they know he means exactly, as *they* think him obliged to *mean*, if he will be *Veracious* in his *Communion* with *them*? But our *Adversaries*, (who took this Occasion to upbraid us,) took *Scandal* at it. So they might who were *willing*, and *glad*, to find Occasions of *taking Scandal at us*; and are

are therefore no farther competent Judges of *Scandal* given by *us*, than as their *Arguments* may prove the *Scandal Just and Reasonable*. Where their *Arguments* cannot prove it so, we shall have Reason to presume that such *Scandal* is not given by *us*, but *taken by themselves*. And, for such *Scandal*, *they*, not *we*, are to be responsible. Let us therefore see how they can prove that our *Presence* at the *Office* of our Church's *Litany* did imply our *designing to pray* to God to *keep and strengthen* our *Sovereign* in an *erroneous persecuting Communion*. If they would deal ingeniously with us, I do not think that *themselves* did heartily believe that our *Presence* at the

the Litany was with any such a Design of offering any such Prayer for our selves, or of consenting to any Form that might import it, as offered in our Names by others for us. Nor do I doubt but that themselves believed the contrary, that we would have refused to have joined in it, if we had been left to our own Liberty, and if we could have refused it without Violation of the Communion professed by us. And that for this demonstrative Reason, because it was so inconsistent with our Interest, as well as our Principles, to consent to any such Petition, whilst we professed the Communion of the Church of England, with whose Interests such a Petition

Petition is so manifestly *inconsistent*. How then can they, at the same time, pretend that our *Communion* with that same *Church* gives the many *just* Occasion for *believing* any thing so incredible concerning us, when they know, in their *Consciences*, that we *cannot* mean as they pretend we mean, by that very same Argument that we *are* of this *Communion*? And if our *Communion* do not prove it, but the contrary, how can they pretend our *presence* at the *Office*, where this *Prayer* was used, a *just* *Ground* for the *Scandal* they are pleased to take at us, with any *Consistency* with their *own* *Veracity*? We *private Communicants* could

E not

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not avoid our Presence at that Prayer, by forsaking the Communion wherein it was used, without forsaking a Communion that disapproved it, and thought itself obliged by Principles to disapprove it as much as we our selves. How then could this be pleaded as a good Reason for forsaking the Communion, that we disapproved that Prayer? And how could our Presence at that Communion be fairly interpreted as an Argument of our approving the Prayer? If it be not, where then is the Ground for making our Practice, in continuing in the Communion where the Prayer was used, an Argument of our Insincerity? And if there was neither Falshood nor Scandal in continuing in

in the Communion, I cannot conceive how we could have excused our selves in leaving it.

It was very true, that the Prayer, we speak of, ought to have been changed. But till it might be changed Regularly, there was nothing that could excuse, much less justify, a Separation for it. Where-ever the fault was that continued it, it was certainly not imputable to the Communion, and could not therefore be imputable to the Communicant, as a Sin for continuing in that Communion, which was no way fairly chargeable with it. The fault could not be justly charged on the Communicant, but the Governors, who had alone the

Such Prayers are not the fault of the Communicants; and may sometimes not be the fault even of the Governors of our Communion.

*A Further Prospect of
Right of redressing Publick
Offices by the Nature of the
Constitution.* The *Governours*
therefore can *alone* be liable
to the Blame of it, when it
is indeed *faulty*, not the
Communion. ~~and~~ Because the
Communion *obliges* them to
reform what is amiss in Mat-
ters of this Nature, and
cannot therefore be *answer-
able* for the *Faults* of her
Trustees in Cases wherein
they act *contrary*, not only
to the *Trust*, but to the
Principles, of the *Communion*
that has entrusted them.
How can we therefore *ex-
cuse* our leaving the *Commu-
nion* for that, which (if it
be a *Fault*) yet really is *not*
the *Fault* of the *Communion*?
Yet the Case of the *Petition*
now mentioned was not so
much

much as the *Fault* of the *Governours* of our *Communion*. The *First Composers* of our *Litany* inserted that *Petition* prudently in the *Circumstances* wherein they composed it. It was then fitted to their *Case*, when they had a *Prince* sincerely *professing* their own *Communion*. And all *Communicants* then not only *might*, but were *obliged* by *Principles*, to say *Amen* to that, as any other *Petition* of the *Publick Offices*. The *change* of the *Case* altered the *Signification* of the *Words*, and made them *uncapable* of an *Affent* by the same *Principles* which had made *Affent* a *Duty* formerly. But the *fitting* our old *Offices* to the *new Case* was not the *Duty* of our same Ecclesiastical

*A Further Prospect of
Governours that first Compo-
sed our Liturgy, but of their
Successors for the time Being :
Particularly of those who
were then Living, when the
Case was altered by our ha-
ving a Prince who openly
professed himself of another
Communion. These had
alone been answerable for
the Neglect, if the Grie-
vance might have been re-
medied by their Diligence :
That is, if it had been real-
ly in their Power to have
made the Alteration necessary
upon the Change of the Secu-
lar Successor. But it was
not really in their Power to
make that Change, how
desirous soever they had been
to have made it. To have
acted separately in their sin-
gle Jurisdictions might
have*

have proved of Fatal Consequence to their Unanimity at such a Dangerous Time, when Enemies, under the Patronage of the King, their Proselyte, were ready to inflame the Misunderstandings that might have been occasioned by it, and take Advantage from them for promoting their own destructive Designs. They would, no doubt, have represented under very odious Aggravations, if any Attempt had been made to change the Prayers for the Prince, as an Argument of their Disaffection to him. And the Terrors must have been greater when the Bishops had been thus attacked singly with *Præmunires* and the other Severe Laws

*A Further Prospect of
of Henry the VIIIth, interpreted by Romanists, though
designed at first in Defence of
the Supremacy, and in Favour
of the Reformation. And the
Severities used against the
first Amenders of these Pray-
ers would have terrified
their Brethren from act-
ing Separately, more than if
they had been United in a
Body. Yet their acting in a
Body would have more pro-
voked, and have been more
liable to the Laws, as interpre-
ted and executed by their
professed Enemies. The
mildest of their Instruc-
tions, that could have been
expected, would have been
the Imprisonment of our Bi-
shops, which should have
ordered the change of the Pray-
ers. And that would have
deprived*

deprived us of the Use of all their *Episcopal Authority* for the *Remainder* of that *Reign*. I mention not now the *Animosities*, and perhaps *Schisms*, which might have followed among the *Bishops* themselves thus *Acting singly*, which must have *disabled* them to *remove* the *Scandal* of these *Prayers*. Let us suppose them to have *endured* this *Trial*, and to have *persisted* in their *Patience*, and that *Unanimously*, what further *Security* could have been given for the *Obedience* of their *Clergy* and *People* of their *own* *Communion*, in *using* the *Offices* so *amended*, and *amended* by the *lawful Episcopal Authority*? None that I can fore-see under this *Latitudinarian* *Lea-*

Leaven of our unhappy Age. None till God shall be pleased to revive the Primitive Notions of Subjection in all our Fellow Subjects of the same Spiritual Authority. Without this the Authority could only have exposed it self, but could never have been able to have cleared the Office of this unlawful Prayer. How many Schisms must these unpracticable Endeavours (for amending this Prayer) of even our lawful Authority have involved us in, both from our Spiritual Superiors, and among our selves, which were more happily prevented by our bearing with it, and never offering to separate for it? Thus it appears, that even our Bishops, of that time, could

could not have been justly blamed for that which it was not in their Power to remedy. What Justice then could it have been to have separated from our Communion for a faulty Particular in our Liturgy, for which neither the Communion, nor the Governors of it, can be justly blamed?

In such a Case as this, of a Prayer that grows unpracticable, and irreconcileable with the Doctrine of the Communion, only by the change of External Circumstances; every one should do his own Part, but still with Regard to their several Offices in their due Subordination, and with Regard to the Safety of the Common Society. The Regular Way of Amendment is indeed

^{10.} Such Prayers may be secured from the Scandal, if the officiating Clergy will refuse to read them, or the Auditors do notifie their Dis-sent by not answering Amen.

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indeed by a *Prohibition*, or *Reformation*, of it by the *Governours*, if it may be had, a *mutinous Reformation* being more destructive of the *Authority*, and consequently of the *Society*, than the *Evil* that is pretended to be remedied by it. But if *Authority* cannot be *consulted*, or cannot *interpose*, (as in the *Cases* concerned in our *present Dispute*,) it concerns the *Ministers* who *officiate* not to *offer Petitions*, in the *Name* of the *Church* *inconsistent* with the *Church's Principles*. This would both *free* the *Communicants* from the *Suspicion* of *seeming to consent* to such *Petitions*, by their *Presence* in the *Assemblies* where they are *offered*; and would *free*

free the *Bishops* from the *Odium* of forbidding them, who have not that Occasion of *signifying* their *Dislike* of them, by actual *refusing* to *read* them, without unpracticable Attempts, which might ruin their *Authority* as well as their *Persons*. It might also, by *Degrees*, retrieve that *Obedience* to the *Authority* of the *Bishops* (without which the *Authority* itself cannot be available for *clearing* the *Church* of the *Scandal* of such *Prayers*) by the voluntary *Unanimity* of the *Officiating Clergy* in *forbearing* them. And this is the *Case* wherein, if in any, *all* have Reason to be *unanimous*, because *all* who *officiate* in the same *Communion* have the *same* *Reason* that

that any one has to make a *Conscience* of using them, as being *contrary* to the *Principles* of their whole *Communion*. And, where the Case is *manifest*, do they have as great *Reason* to *presume* on the *Bishop's Consent*, as they commonly do when they change the deceased *Prince's Name* for that of his surviving *Successor*, as knowing it *contrary* to the *Principles* of the *Body* to *pray* for the *Deceased*. Here they may withal be very *safe* in *presuming* it, because they know the *Obligations* *incumbent* on him for giving his *Consent* if they had desired it. They know his *Obligations* to *Rule* according to the *Canons* and *Constitutions* of the *Church* when he was made

made a *Bishop*. They know his Subscriptions to the *Articles* and *Liturgy*. They know his particular Engagements as a *Bishop* of the *Church of England* to be true to its Interests, at least, as to its *Characteristicks* as a particular *Communion*, in Opposition to all *Schismaticks* within his own Jurisdiction, and to all *Foreign Jurisdictions* which refuse *Communion* with him and other Churches acting on the same *Principles*. And they know withal how inconsistent these *Obligations* are with any *Approval* of such *Prayers*. And they know these Things with an *Evidence* and *Certainty* greater than any that can be produced for any *Humane Fallible*

*A Further Prospect of
ble Authority, and therefore
greater than that by which
they know their own Duty,
to quit their own Senti-
ments in Deference to his
Authority.* Withal they
know our Legal Presumptions
concerning Wills not clearly
express'd, that they suppose
the *Testator* a Good Man,
and to mean as he *ought* to
mean if he would *approve*
himself to be so. Now it
is but common *Equity* to
presume the same concerning
the *Bishop* of their *Jurisdi-
ction*, that he also *means* as
he *ought* to mean by the
Principles of the *Communion*
professed by him, at least,
till he *declare* himself to the
contrary. The rather so,
because they very well
know that he *cannot* so *de-
clare*

clare himself without ren-
dring himself justly *suspici-*
ous to the Communion, which
intitles him to his *Authority*
over those who are of it
within his *Jurisdiction*. This
therefore being done by all
the *Officiating Clergy* on so
justifiable a *Presumption*, could
not possibly *hurt* his *Authori-*
ty, nor hinder the *Deference*
which is *due* to him as a *Cat-*
holick Bishop of the *true Com-*
munion, because it *imposes no*
thing on him but what is
necessary to be *supposed* in
him as a *Catholick*, and as of
the *true Communion*, accord-
ing to the *Principles* of the
Church of England. For all
things *consequent* to his being
so, it leaves his *Authority* as
absolute as himself can *desire*
for the *Good* of the *Communion*
professed by him. But this

*A Further Prospect of
Unanimity of the Clergy in not
reading such Prayers, would
effectually secure the Church
from the Scandal of them,
though the Bishop should
concern himself no farther
in it than by his Silence.
For, if such Prayers were
never read, there could be
no Pretence that the Presence
of any private Communicant
at our Ecclesiastical Offices
and Assemblies, should be ta-
ken for an Argument of his
Approbation of them when
they were not used in our
Assemblies. However, tho'
the Officiating Clergy could
not be prevailed on to forbear
the offering up such Prayers in
the Name of their respective
Congregations; yet, even the
Laity themselves may forbear
their Part, of signifying
their Assent, by answering*

Amen

Amen to them. And they may *justify* their *Omission* of that *Response* by the known *Principles* of the *Communion*, without any *Reflection* on the *Governours* of it. This will better appear if their *Case* be *known*, yet never taken *Notice* of by any *publick Censure*. And they would have no *Reason* to fear any such *Censure* from *Governours* acting on the common and known *Principles* of their *Communion*. In this *Case* they would have *Reason* to *presume* that they have the *Leave* of their *Governours*, when they know them *obliged* to grant them the *Leave* presumed by the same *Principles* of the same *Communion*. And by how much their *Case* of thus *signifying* their *Dissent* to

such Prayers, by forbearing the *Response*, which signifies their Assent to their other Prayers, is more notorious, by so much the stronger Reason they have for that *Presumption*, (if the *Bishop* takes no publick Notice of it,) that the *Bishop* does not disallow their Liberty in this Particular. Especially if there be *Multitudes* that take the same Liberty, without any *Signification* of Dislike in the *Governour*, whose Office it was to *signifie* his Mind concerning this *Omission*, if he did indeed *dislike* it. Nor is there any Reason to expect that the *Bishop* should *signifie* his Mind more *expressly* in such a Case as this is. That is, when there are no *new* Prayers inserted in the common Offices

ces by any *new* Episcopal Authority, but the Signification of the same Prayers is changed only by the extrinsic change of the Persons for whom they were originally designed: Or when the *Bishops* are disabled to exercise their lawful Authority in such a Way as may secure their *Unanimity*, without which we could not hope for the desired Success. However, when this Signification of a *Dislike* is known, but not censured by the Spiritual *Governours*, nor *Assent* required from such *Dissenters* as they would approve themselves *veracious Communicants*; this, at least, would be apparent, that an *Assent* to such *Prayers* is not insisted on as a *Condition*

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on of their *Communion*. And this will be sufficient to show that the *Communicants* cannot be under any *Obligation*, on Account of those *Prayers*, to leave the *Communion* that uses them. And it may suffice, to clear the *Conscience* of the *Communicant* from any *Suspicion* of *Insincerity* or *Scandal* in such acts of *Communion*, when it shall thereby appear that his *continuing* in the *Communion* is indeed no *Argument* of his *Approval* of such *Immoral Prayers*.

11. No one Church *Communion* can hold long, if different Sentiments of Subjects from their *Governours* concerning Occasional *Prayers* be allowed as sufficient to excuse Subjects for separating from the *Communion*.

In truth such *Prayers* in the *Name* of whole *Bodies*, to which every *Individual Member* of the *Bodies* cannot heartily *assent*, are unavoidable in any great Body whatsoever. Nor can the *Unity*

Unity of any Society hold long that is confin'd to so ticklish and contingent Conditions. Sometimes the *Corruption* of the *Governours*, sometimes their *Mistakes*, sometimes that of the *Subjects*, and yet, on both Sides, consistent with great *Sincerity*, may cause a Difference in *Opinion* concerning *Occasional Prayers* between *Governours* and their *Subjects*. Sometimes the *change* of the *Signification* of the *Prayers*, by *extrinsic* changes of the *Persons* and *Circumstances*, may make so great a *change* in the *Prayers* *themselves*, as that what was not only *Lawful*, but *Prudent* too, in the first *compiling* of it, may cease to be either the one or the other,

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ther, without any Change
or Difference of Opinion, ei-
ther in the *Governours*, or in
their *Subjects*, as in the Case
already mentioned. And
every Revolution of the
State upon the Case of *doubt-
ful Titles*, which have not
Evidence enough to make all
the Subjects of the same
Opinion, must in course
make a *Schism* in the *Church*,
if *this Exception* be too
scrupulously insisted on.
Nor is it *possible*, in any
long Succession whatsoever,
to avoid such *Titles*. Occa-
sional *Prayers* are generally
grounded on *Facts*, which
are often known *Personally*
to few, and cannot be noti-
fied to far the *greatest Part*
of those who are concern-
ed in the *Prayers* occasioned
by

by them, but by *remote* and very *exceptionable* Testimonies. And, concerning *Facts*, even the *Romanists* themselves dare not generally defend the *Infallibility* of their *Ecclesiastical Superiors*, excepting what has been, of late, attempted by some of the *daring* Order, in their *bigotry* against the *Jansenists*. Must we therefore have frequent *Schisms* on account of these frequently returning *Occasions*, which are *inevitable* in all *Governments* that are lodged in *fallible Superiors*, and so liable to *changeable Circumstances*, but no way imputable to the *Communions* from which the *Separation* is made? Withal, those *Provisional Prayers* are usually the

the Thoughts, not of the *Majority*, even of the *Governours* themselves, or of a *Number* sufficient to *conclude* the *Absents* by any *Rules of Government*; but of those only who are *near at Hand*, and can be *consulted* in the *small Respite* that can be allowed for consulting them. Nor will the *Nature of Government* allow that it should be otherwise. So little Reason there is for concluding the *Sense* of the *Church* her self from such *Provisional Prayers*. Why then should the whole *Communion* of the *Church* be deserted for what may be the *Sense* of a very *small* part of it, and may be as much *against* the *Sense* of the *Majority* of it, as it is *against* the *Sense*

Sense of those particular *Communicants* who are supposed to *separate* for it? And where can they betake themselves, upon their *Separation*, where they will not find the same *Inconveniences*, and as *frequent*, as in the *Communion* deserted by them? Where can they find a *Communion* in the *World*, where the *Governours* are not liable to the like *variety of Opinions* concerning *Secular Titles*, sometimes really *Litigious*? Must they therefore have no *Prayers* for their *Governours* at all? That *both* the differing Parties will think inconsistent with the *Apostles* *Prescription* to the contrary. But it is impossible in that *Case* to prescribe any

Form

Form wherein both *Parties* can agree. If therefore there must be a *Compliance* of one Side, so far, at least, as to bear with the contrary Sentiments in their common *Offices*, while such Prayers are not *imposed* as *Conditions of Communion*, the Favourers of the Secular Government will take it for their own *Prerogative* to carry their Cause in this Particular. And they will, no doubt, determine that the *Prayers* offered in *Churches* possessed by the Favour of the Secular Power, should be offered for that *Competitor* by whom they are *maintained* in the *Possession* of the *Churches* wherein the *Prayers* are made. This Plea our Adversaries have against

against us now, whilst we have *Spiritual Governours* to oppose to the fallen *Spiritual Governours*, who have a *Right to legitimate* our *Publick Offices* in the *Name of our Body and Communion*. But what *Right* shall we be able to pretend in the *Case in View*? The whole *Right* of *Publick Offices* wherein the *Communion* is represented, will be *then* in our *Adversary Bishops* alone, whether the *Communion* be represented in the *Churches*, or in our *private Assemblies* for the *Celebration of Sacraments*. How shall we *then* be able to *justify* our encroaching on the *Right* of our *unrivalled Superiors* in their *Prerogative* of *imposing* *Publick Offices*? Those therefore ought

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ought to be taken for certain Criteria in Reasonings of this Nature. God ought not so to be understood in his Obligations to *Veracity*, as to make his own Establishments *inconsistent*, and no way *answerable* to his own *Design* in making them. Seeing therefore it is certain that he has made his *Church* as a *Society* ordinarily necessary to *Salvation*, he could not allow the *Subjects* such a *Liberty* of *separating* from its *Communion* as would excuse them for *separating* for Reasons which must frequently occur under *fallible Superiors*. Such a *Reason* this would be, of *whole Offices of Prayers* agreeable in every *Particular* with the *private Sentiments* of every *single Com-*

Communicant, who is obliged to be present at them. If such frequent Separations of scrupulous Persons be justifiable, no numerous Body can long preserve its Unity, nor could any fallible Government long secure Obedience. God would not therefore have confined the Ordinary Means of Salvation to them, if so great Numbers of very well-meaning Persons could not expect Salvation by them. This therefore must be as certainly false, that such Scruples as these concerning Prayers prescribed by Superiors are sufficient to excuse a Separation, as it is certainly true, that God has made a Body, and Submission to the Government of it, Ordinarily necessary.

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necessary to that *Salvation*, which he designs that it shall be *actually attained* by, at least, the *generality* of *well-meaning Persons*.

12.
No *Forms*
are secure
from parti-
cular *Peti-*
tions with
which some
particular
Communi-
cants may
not be able
to join *Ve-*
raciously.

It is really *impossible* to have any *General Communion* of a whole numerous *Body*. If it might excuse particular *Communicants* from their *Duty* to the *Communion* professed by them, that every particular *Petition* is not adapted to the particular *Sentiments* of each *Communicant*, and if it were withal *inconsistent* with their *Ve-racity* to be *present* at the *use* of those *Petitions* which were *not* so; and they were no way *concluded* by the *Sense* of their *Superiors*, even when *different* from their *own Sense*. The *single Votes* of any

any very numerous Body cannot possibly be collected (no, nor if even the *Majority*,) as often as there is an occasion of *new Prayers*. Yet even a *Majority* can do no more to make the *Presence* of even *smaller Numbers* of *Dissenters*, at Prayers not fitted to their particular *Sentiments* consistent with their *Veracity*, than the *Sense* of their common *Superiors*. That is, no otherwise than as the *smaller Number* of *Dissenters* ought to be over-ruled and concluded by the *Majority* of Suffrages of their common *Body*. Thus it is in all *Publick Forms*, whereby the *Sense* of whole *Bodies* is usually represented. Nor does the *new Invention* of *Ex-temporary Forms* solve the

G Mat-

Matter better. Even they are prescribed Forms to all that are present in the *Assembly*, excepting the *Orator himself*. And there must be less *Foresight* of what others can join in, upon so little *warning*, than in the Issues of more *sedate* Thoughts, and of Authorized *Assemblies*. They who are least wanting to themselves, in contributing what they can by their own best *Endeavours*, have the best Title to the *Divine Assistance*. And the *Prayers* of *Two* or *Three* in an *Assembly* have a Promise of *Christ's Presence* among them which is not made to their *separate Inventions*: And Men *Authorized* by God *himself* to present his Peoples *Prayers*

Prayers to him have a peculiar Gift of the Spirit given them when they receive their Orders for the Benefit of the Publick more than themselves. Why then may they not expect a larger Measure of the Spirit of Prayer and Supplication? If therefore even these may fail in representing the Sense of all that are concerned in Publick Assemblies, much rather they may fail which can pretend no higher than to the Productions of natural Parts, and private Spirit. If any Forms could be thought of not liable to this Inconveniencie, we might most probably expect it in David's Psalms. They were the *ancientest* Liturgical Forms we know of, both in

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the *Jewiſh* and the *Christian*
Church, and had withal
that higher Degree of *Divine*
Assiſtance and *Inſpiration* in
their first *Compoſure*, to
which no late *Forms* can
pretend. Yet what *David*
speaks in the Person of a
King would not fit the Per-
son of a *Subjeſt*. What he
speaks as a *Man* cannot be
repeated by a *Woman* in her
own Person. What he says
as an *Old Man*, or as a *Young*
Man, cannot agree to any
that are not of the same
Age with *himſelf*, when he
wrote those particular *Pſalms*
wherein he uses these *par-*
ticular Expressions. No more
can his *Euchariſtial* *Pſalms*
beſt the Condition of *Mourn-*
ers, nor the *Pænitential* ones
the State of *Rejoicers*. Espe-
cially

cially when they return in Course, and are not particularly adapted to the particular *Providences* of the Seasons, wherein they are used. And, even when they are indeed fitted to the Circumstances of the *Church*, they may still be as different as ever from the *Case* of the *Communicant*. Must he therefore separate from the *Communion* of the *Church* when his predominant *Sorrow*, even for the greatest Concerns of his *Soul*, hinder him from partaking in the *Church's Joy*; or when the Transports of his *Heavenly Exultations* over-ballance his present *Sympathy* in the *Church's Sufferings*, so that he cannot be conscious of those ardent and inflamed Passions that

are imported by the Pathetical Expressions of the Publick Offices? If this be allowed, there can never be a *lasting Communion* of such *Numbers* as God has been pleased to oblige to *constant Communion*.

13.
Private
Prayers
were anti-
ently allow-
ed and en-
couraged in
the *Places*
Dedicated
to the Use
of *Publick*
Religious
Assemblies,
to which
none were
obliged to
signifie their
Consent be-
sides those
who offered
them.

The best *Expedient* I can think of, for satisfying *Conscience* in Affairs of this *Nature*, is this, to remember that the *Publick Offices* are principally designed for the use of the *Publick*, and are therefore to consist of *Petitions* wherein the *Publick* is concerned, of which the *Governours* are the only Proper and Authentick *Judges*; and that in Matters of this Kind *private Persons* are to be concluded and over-ruled by their *Governours*, (in Case they

they differ from them in their Opinions concerning the *Expediency of Prayers for the Publick Good,*) whatever other *Advantage* they may have of their *Governours*, in regard of better *Information*. This I conceive to be the *fundamental Mistake* of our Brethren in this Dispute, that they think the *Publick Offices* to represent the *Sense* of every *particular Member* of the *Body* concerning the *things mentioned in the Prayers*, and their *private Opinions* concurring with the *Publick*; and that they think the *Amen* implies it, which whosoever cannot answer *veraciously*, is by this Reasoning therefore obliged to *separata from the Commu-*

nion. And there is no doubt but that private Prayers were practised and encouraged in those Times in the Places of their Publick Assemblies, and that none could offer such Petitions veraciously, who did not heartily desire them. For such there were Seasons allowed in the Publick Solemnities, both of the *Jews* and *Heathens*; that is in the *Intervals*, when the *Priests* were making their *Oblations* in the *Adyta*, and had no *Leisure* to attend to the *verbal Offices*. These were *private*, as expressing the *private Sense* of the *Petitioners* in his own *Words*, if in *any Words* at all. For it was at his own *Pleasure*, where his *Prayer* shall be *vocal*, or only *mental*. So

Hannah

Hannah Prayed for her Son. So the People prayed without, while *Zacharias* officiated at the *Golden Altar of Incense*, in that part of the *Temple* which was not *accessible* by any but *Priests*, while they were employed in that *holiest* Part of their *Office*. Such were the *Prayers* mentioned by *Juvenal* and *Persius*, which even the *Petitioners* themselves were *ashamed* of, and therefore were not *desirous* of being *heard* by any but the *Deities* to whom they offered them. The like *private Prayers* gave Occasion for the *Oremus* pronounced by the *Deacon* in the *Christian Offices*, to warn them when they were to *discontinue* such their *private Prayers* that they

they might attend to those which were offered in the Name of all. These *private Prayers* none were concerned to know, or to ratifie with their *Amen*, besides the Persons who made them. Yet, the *private Persons*, who were alone concerned in them, had more Encouragement to hope that they might prove successful when they were offered in their *Assemblies*, than if they had offered them singly in their *private Closets*. One Inducement was the Holiness of the Places themselves where their *Publick Assemblies* were kept, on that very Account of their being set apart for the use of such *Assemblies*. This they had reason to hope for, by the

the Reasonings of those Times, on account of the Separation itself performed by Persons Authorized to transfer the Property of such Places to Sacred Uses, and empowered by God to receive in his Name what was devoted by the Donors to him. This separating it from profane Uses, and the consequent Obligation upon Persons there Assembling to behave themselves, while they were there, with more Caution and Circumspection than elsewhere, made it fitter for Divine Appearances and Manifestations than it had been before the Dedication. Besides this, the Office of Consecration (of which we have a very Ancient Form in the Dedication

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tion of the Temple by Solo-
mon,) requested a peculiar
Notice of Prayers made in
such a Consecrated Place,
that God would hear in Hea-
ven, and do according to
the Petitions there offered.
Not only grant that Prayers,
also made towards it, should
find the like Acceptance.
This made Daniel, in his
Babylonish Captivity, open his
Window towards Jerusalem,
though the Temple was then
demolished, and though he
thereby exposed himself to
the Accusations of his insi-
dious Adversaries, who, it
seems expected he should do
so from his Principles and Pra-
ctice before the Edict of the
King, which had then made
it Capital. Withal, those
Consecrating Prayers, in the
First

*First Consecrations, were usually seconded by some extraordinary Significations of the Pleasure of the Numen, such as are mentioned in the Scripture in the Dedications of the Tabernacle and the Temple. By these the Consecrators were satisfied of the Litation of their Sacrifices, and the Success and Acceptance of their Consecratory Prayers; and that God accordingly would answer their Expectations, in hearing their future Prayers relating to such Places, and performing what should be desired in them. And the same was presumed also after the failing of those Extra-ordinaries, when there were no ominous Prognostications to the contrary, To which may

may be added, (in Relation to our Christian Practice,) the Promise of our Lord himself, that he would be present where Two or Three are gathered together in his Name, which Promise does not belong to Persons praying singly. These Considerations made *Communicants* willing to pray for their peculiar unknown Requests in the Places appointed for the Publick Assemblies. Yet none of their Brethren were obliged to second them in such their unknown Petitions, by

^{14.} They were allowed, not only in *private Concernments*, but in *Publick* also. As when the *Prayers* were *bidden*.

This was the Case in *Petitions* of so appropriated a Nature, as that none but the *Petitioner* himself was concerned in them. But it

it was not only in Affairs of this Kind that private Prayers were used in the Primitive Christian Assemblies; they also practised in all those Forms of the Ancient Liturgies, where Prayers were *bidden*, but not *prescribed*, though the Subjects were of publick Concernment, as they generally were in the Forms of *bidding*. These *bidden* Prayers were generally of the Deacons, who were the *ἱεροχέιροι*, who put the several Persons concerned in the Publick Offices in mind of their Turns, that they might be managed without Confusion. Bishops and Priests never, that I remember, *bid* Prayers, but use Forms, wherein they expected that all the

Con-

Congregation should join by answering *Amen*. This Form of *bidding* therefore used by the *Deacons*, was only a *Recommendation* of the *Publick Necessities* of the *Church* to those *private Devotions* of the particular *Communicants*, for which a *Respite* was allowed when the *Sacerdotal Ministers* were employed in their *Mystical Offices*, in a Voice purposely *low*, that it might not be understood by any but those who themselves officiated; or in *Intervals* between the *Bishops Orders* to the *Singers* and *Readers* for *New Lessons* or *New Psalms*, which were not (as they have been since the *IVth Century*) *Stated*, but *Arbitrary*. In these *bidden Prayers* there-

therefore no *Forms of Words* was prescribed, but every particular *Communicant* was left to his own *Discretion*, how he would express his own *Desires*, whether by any *Form of Words* at all, or only *Mentally*. It was sufficient that *all* were *agreed* in paying for the *things* mentioned in the *Form of Bidding*. Yet whether they did so, or *not*, could not be *known*, but only *presumed*. But here was no *Use* of the *assenting Form* of answering *Amen*, where every one prayed for *himself*, and none *concerned* *himself* in the *Forms* of his *Fellow Communicants*. And I am apt to think that this was the *Reason* why this *Form* was appropriated to the Order

*A Further Prospect of
of the Deacons, who are not
Authorized to convey God's
Blessings to the People, nor
the Peoples Prayers to God,
that being the proper Office
of Sacerdotal Mediation and
Intercession between both Par-
ties concerned in the Cova-
nant.*

15.
The Forms
of Prayers,
wherein
whole As-
semblies are
concerned
to join, are
to be pre-
scribed by
the Gover-
nours of
such Assem-
blies.

The Case was otherwise
where *Priests*, of any Kind,
were concerned. There
the Form of Words wherein
the *Petition* was conceived
is always used by the officia-
ting *Priest*, which left the
private Communicants no other
Liberty but that of an-
swering *Amen* when they
found it agreeable to their
own Sentiments. And I
know no Hypothesis what-
soever whereby it can be
denied to be the *Priests
Right*

Right to prescribe the Words of Publick Prayers in the Name of the whole Congregations wherein they offer them. The most clamorous Opposers of Forms in general are *themselves* most licentious in practising it. Every private Minister among *them* imposes his least deliberate *Thoughts* on the whole Body how different soever from the *Sense* of the greatest part of his *Auditors*. Nor was it ever otherwise, nor could be, but that the Officiator's *Words*, as well as *Thoughts*, must be the *Rule* to those who are to join with him. Among the Romans it was the Office of the presiding Priest, *præire* in the *verba solennia*, not of *Vows* only, but of *Prayers*

Briffon de
Form. I. 1.
p. 61. 107.

H 2 also.

also. This left no Liberty of *Words* to those who were concerned, as *Auditors* and *Communicants*, to join in those Offices as they were practised, even among the *Heathens*. The same must have been the Case in all other Offices which were *Musical*. These must have been certain *Forms*, approved, at least, and received into publick Use by the *Governours* of the *Communion*, whoever they were who were the *Composers* of them. By those *Governours* they were *imposed* on the publick officiating *Singers*, which Office of *Singers* was received, not only among the *Heathens*, but among the *Jews* and *Christians* also. Nor could they have been fitted to

Musical

Musical Tunes, (wherein whole *Chorus's* might *join*, sometimes *together*, sometimes in *separate Parts*) if all the *Words* had not been *ascertained* by the *Authority* from which the *Singers* received them. Nor could the *new Songs* have been looked on by the *Psalmist* himself as such *Rarities*, if it had been their *constant Practice* to *vary* their *Forms* relating to the *same Subjects* as often as they met in their *Publick Assemblies*, as they do who are against *repeating* the *same Forms*. These must certainly have been *set Forms* which are inscribed to the *chief Musician*. The *Words* were fixed before they came to *him*, who was to fix the *Tunes*

before the Inferior Singers were to offer them in the Name of the People. Thus it appeared that neither *Words* nor *Tunes* were in the Power of the *private Communicants*. Nothing therefore could be left to *private Persons* in such *Offices* but their *Amen*, as far as that was consistent with their *Veracity*. The same was also the Case of the *Prosaick Prayers* offered by the *Bishops* and *Priests* in their own *Persons*, but in the *Name* of their respective *Congregations*. These have always been received into *Use* by that *Authority* of the *Church* which Authorized the *Liturgical Offices*. And that *without* consulting *particular Communicants*, or any *Majority* of them, or any *Body* of them which

which might any way represent the *Whole*, or conclude the *Absents*. Nor has even *Blondel* himself, who is so concerned for the *Rights* of the *People* of all *kinds*, observed one *single* Instance where the *People* were ever consulted concerning *Prayers*, to which their *Affent* was nevertheless *expected*, and *presumed*. Yet it had been of the greatest *Consequence* to have consulted them on these Occasions, if every *Difference* of *Opinion* had been thought sufficient to excuse their *separating* from the whole *Communion* for preserving the Reputation of their *Veracity*. So clear it is, that the *Clergy* are, and always *have* been, in an uncontroverted *Possession* of this *Right*, of transacting

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in the Name of their Spiritual Societies, without particular Delegations to do so. Nor is there any Society that I know of, that is numerous, wherein the *same* Power is not allowed to *Governours*, as absolutely necessary for discharging their *Trust* upon the Principles of *Government* in *general*, without any particular *Stipulations* for conveying it. Whoever are made *Governours*, are thereby made the *Authorized Judges* of the *Publick Good*, by which the Sense of the *Body* is to be determined, as to all their *Motions* as a *Body*. Accordingly all the *Executive* Power is, at the same time, committed to them, to put it in their *Power* to execute what they shall judge for the *Publick Good*

Good, who can judge by *no other Judgments but their own*. And why is *this Power committed to them*, but to enable them to *over-rule* all *Private Judgments, when different from theirs*? This Difference of *Private Judgments* concerning the *Publick Good*, and the *Animosities and Wars* which are the natural *Consequences of that Difference*, when there is no more equal *Umpire* to *over-rule* the *Party* that is *judged unreasonable*, is indeed the true *Reason*, obliging *Free Persons* (where the *Right of Government* is derived from *Compacts of such Free Persons*) to enter into *Societies*. When therefore they *agree to form a Society, and settle a Government*, they must thenceforward be *presumed*

ed to agree to transfer this Right they had before of insisting on their *own* Judgments concerning the *Publick Good* to the *Authority* settled by them, as a more *Impartial* Judge between them, than *each* can be in Relation to his *own* Opinion. Thus it is in Matters of the *greatest Consequence*, but especially in *Prudentials* relating to present *Circumstances* of *Time* and *Place*. These are generally left by the *Supreme Governours* to the *Discretion* of their *Subordinate Delegates*, as *best* fitted for the *Decision* of such Matters, by their *Presence* in those *Circumstances* which are *uncapable* of any *general Determinations*. Seeing therefore it peculiarly belongs

belongs to the Spiritual Governors to prescribe the Prayers which are for the general Good of the Spiritual Societies, as the most competent Judges of the Publick Good of such Societies, it must much more belong to them to judge of those Provisional Prayers which are to be fitted to present Circumstances.

This holds in Governments derived Originally from Contracts of the particular Members of the Societies, formed by such Compacts; but more firmly in a Government of that Nature we are speaking of; that is, of a Government immediately derived from God himself, such as this is of the Spiritual Society. As the Clergy represent God, and can oblige him

him to ratifie in *Heaven* what they act by *his Authority* on *Earth*; so it is certain, that as they do not receive that Authority from the *People*, so neither can they receive any *Bounds* of it from them. The only Pretence for the *Peoples Restraint* can be as to that Authority they have of *representing*, and *obliging* the *People*, because *Prayers* in the *Name* of the *People* may be taken for an *Original Right* of the *People* whose *Desires* are to be expressed in the *Prayers*; yet *Renunciation* of their own *Judgments* is taken for so *essential* to the constituting a *Society* and *Government*, that, when they are once settled, *Communities* are, in the *Civil Law*,

Law, taken for Minors. As therefore *Minors* are concluded by the *Acts* of their *Guardians*, (though no *Consent* be either *obtained* or *asked*; so the *Sense* of the *Ecclesiastical Superiors* is sufficient to conclude the *Ecclesiastical Community*, how different soever it may prove from the *Sense* of many of its *particular Members*. Yet *God* is also here concerned, as to the *Right* he also has to determine by whom he will be pleased to *accept* of those *Prayers* which are offered in the *Name* of the *People*: So he was pleased to declare, in the *Case* of the *Friends* of *Job*, that he would *not accept* of their *own Prayers* for *themselves*, but by the *Meditation* of

of Job, who had been injured by their former censorious Discourses. So he also heard the Prayers of Abraham for Abimeleck, in relation to the Sin of detaining Sarah from him. Having therefore appointed the Clergy as the Publick Intercessors in Affairs relating to the Publick Good of the Spiritual Society, God has thereby empowered them immediately to be the Judges of those Prayers for the Publick, which may hope for Acceptance with him, and has deprived Private Members of that Right they might otherwise have pretended of presenting their Prayers for the Publick in their own Words; at least as to the Forms by which they were to

to be presented by the Officiating Ministers.

This Point therefore being gained, that the prescribing the Forms of the Publick Prayers belongs to the Right of the Governing Clergy; it will thence follow that no Private Communicant can justify his invading it, but will be answerable if he do so, for all the Consequents that may follow upon it. And this Right is certainly invaded by any Private Communicant, who shall venture to separate from the Communion for Prayers unwarrantable, so long as the Communion is neither Heretical, nor Schismatical: So it would be judged, in the like Case, in any other Society. It is certain that Addresses

16.
Our Presence therefore at Prayers not approved by us, does not imply our being of the same Mind, but only that we own our selves Members of that Body, which is to be concluded by the Authors of such Prayers, which we must own, though we be not of the same Mind.

dresses and Petitions are made in our Parliaments to our Princes, which many Particular Members believe not unreasonable only, but unlawful; yet these over-voted Members, when they are over-ruled by Majority of Suffrages, do not discharge the Duty of Good Subjects, unless they acquiesce till they have an Opportunity of carrying their juster Point as fairly as the contrary has been carried by their Adversaries. None could commend their Justice, or their Prudence either, if they should therefore leave the House; but their Country would have just Cause to treat them as Publick Enemies, if they should therefore go over to any Assemblies opposite

opposite to the *Laws* of their Country. That is not all; they are to treat the *Law* carried against them as a *Law* of their Country, and the *Petition* as the *Sense* of their *Body*, as much as themselves would have expected it from their Adversaries, if they had carried their supposed *juster* Cause against them by as great a *Majority of Suffrages*. Suppose we therefore that the *House* should order one of their own *over-voted* Members to *present* such an *Address* to the *Prince*: This was *really* the Case of one of the most Conscientious Statesmen in the Reign of King *Charles II*. An *Address* was then carried *unacceptable* to the *Prince*, and

I opposed

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opposed by that very Person
in the *House* ; Yet his Ad-
versaries were not content-
ed with their Success against
him *there* ; but, to insult
him the more, pitched up-
on him particularly as the
Person who was to deliver
it : Yet he did not there-
fore *decline* the Office ; nor
did he think himself obli-
ged in Duty to do so. He
knew very well the *Right*
the *House* had to pitch upon
him, as well as any other
Member, for Services of
that Nature ; and that there
was no allowed *Rule* to excuse
Persons from those Services,
who had been *over-voted* in
carrying the *Address*, any
more than *others*, when the
Majority of the *House* were
pleased to insist on their
Right.

Right. ^{and} He knew withal, that such Presentation of it as the *Act* of his *Body* was very *true*, and very *consistent* with his own *private* *Sentiments* to the contrary. Whilst he *opposed* it in the *House*, his *Adversaries* themselves had allowed *himself* the same *Liberty* they had taken *themselves*. And they knew themselves *obliged* by the *Principles* of the *Constitution* to do so. He knew their carrying it *against* him did not oblige him to *change* his *Opinion*, nor was ever *understood* to do so. He knew they had no *Interest* to understand it so, as knowing very well how *easie* it was for *his* *Case* to become *theirs*, when they should also be *over-voted*

ind future occasions. He knew his very *Act of Presentation* implied no such change in his *Private Opinion*, no Form of presenting it implying that he presented it as his *own Opinion*, but *theirs*. He knew the *Rule* by which it had been carried, as having a *Majority of Suffrages*, plainly supposed that that *might* and *ought* to be taken for the *Sense of the Body*, which was *not* the *Sense of all*, even *present*, *Members*: And, by this *Rule*, he could not *deny*, nor *doubt*, but that it was *really* the *Sense of his Body*. How could he therefore *excuse* himself from the *Duty* imposed on him, when it implied no more but his *assenting* to

a known undeniable Truth, at the Command of those who were Authorized by the Laws of his Country, to oblige him? He did not offer to excuse himself. Nor can I see how our Dear Brethren can, by the same Parity of Reasoning, excuse themselves in the Case we are now concerned for. Their Presence at the blamed Prayers does no more imply their Approbation of them, than his Presentation of the now mentioned Address did that he approved it, either before or after it had passed the House. His presenting it as the Sense of the House, though contrary to his own private Sense, and his owning it as a Duty to do so, by an Authority himself owned sufficient to

lay that *Obligation* on him, implied no more than his owning himself as a *Member* of that *Body* which concluded *him*, (though dissenting from them in *Opinion*) by their rightfully prevailing *Authority*. This *Duty* of a *Member* to the common *Body* was that which prevailed with him, not only to be *present* at the *Delivery* of this *Address*, but to be concerned as a *Principal* (so far at least as a *Subordinate* *Power* can be reckoned as a *Principal*, in Comparison with others of the same Rank of *Subordinates*) in the *Delivery* of it, though *contrary* to his *own* *Opinion*. Nor is there any thing in this Consideration also that will not fully reach our *Brethren* under

the

the Case in View. They neither can excuse themselves then for living without Sacraments, nor can they, by Principles, receive Sacraments in any other Communion, by the Reasonings already insisted on. Nor will their Presence at the Publick Offices, without answering Amen to those particular Prayers, imply their Assent to them any more than that Excellent Person's presenting the Address did his Approbation of it. Presence alone is certainly the lower Degree of Approbation, if both of them were to be taken for any Degrees at all. If therefore his Duty as a Member obliged him to present the Address, however otherwise ungrateful to

I 4 him,

him, much more their *Membership* must, at last, oblige them to be *present* at disliked Prayers, especially when they may be so without any Signification of *Assent*; and when they cannot avoid their being *present* at them without violating their *Duty* to the whole *Communion*.

^{17.} *Our Presence at the Publick Offices, without affenting to the Immoral Petitions, Accounts for both our Duties, both to our Spiritual Superiors, and to our private Vacancy.* But you conceive that we cannot be *present* at the Publick *Assemblies*, where a *stated Liturgy* is used, and every Person oblig'd to say *Amen* to every *Prayer* of it, without involving our selves in the Guilt of the *Immoral Petitions*. I should indeed be inclinable to be of your Mind, if what you suggest had been true, that the same *Duty* to our *Communion*, which obliges

ges us to be *present* at the *Prayers*, had obliged us to answer *Amen* to every *particular Prayer*. But the *Reasoning* now insisted on may let you see the *separateness* of these *Two Duties*: That our *Presence* at the *Assemblies* of the *Body*, whose *Communion* we profess, does not oblige us to be of the same *Opinion* of the *Governours* of it in every *particular Petition* prescribed by them. If *both* these may be performed at once, it will be the best *Expedient* for reconciling our *Conscience* and our *Communion*. We shall secure our selves from the *Guilt* of the *Immoral Petitions*, if we *signifie* our *Dissent*, by *not* answering *Amen* to these, as we do the other Peti-

Petitions. This must needs argue our *different* Opinion of *these* Petitions from what we have of the *other* Petitions wherein we do without Scruple *join*. And on the other Side, if we will *own* our selves *Members* of the Body, in whose Name the Petitions are offered, I cannot see how we can do it on *easier* Terms than those of being *present* at the *Use* of them, *without* any Signification of our particular *Affent*. That very Advantage which they have, as being the *Sense* of the *greater* Part, and as being *imposed* by those who are the *Authorized Judges* of the Body, and of what is to be *requested* for the *Publick Good* of the Body, (of which they are likewise the *competent*

tent Judges,) must necessarily entitle them to be fairly the *Sense* of the *visible Body*, how much soever they may differ from the *private Opinions* of *particular Members* of the same *Body*. And their being *Legally* the *Sense* of the *Body*, intitles them to a Place in the *Publick Offices*, wherein the *Sense* of the *Body* is to be represented; and of *private Persons* no otherwise than as they are *continued* in the *Body* as *Members* of it, or *concluded* by it as *over-voted Members*. We cannot therefore deny but that they will have an *Ecclesiastically Legal Title* to the Place they shall then profess in our *Publick Liturgies*, by the *Authority* of that *same Body*, of which we shall then

then be *obliged* in *Conscience* to profess our selves *Members*, when we shall have no other Authority to oppose to it which may any way pretend to conclude dissenting *Members*. Nor can I see how we can *profess* our selves *Members* of the *Body*, by whose *Authority* we are *over-ruled* by our *Presence* at those *Offices*, where our *Duty* to the *Community* requires our *Presence*, though *Petitions* be used in them, to which we cannot heartily *assent*. We *own* our *Duty* to the *Government* of the *Society* by being *present* at their *Publick Assemblies*, when they are pleased to *require* it from us. And we do, at the same time, own that our *Compliance* therein is not derived

rived from our being of the same Opinion, by abstaining from the Response by which Assent is usually signified. And by our Presence on those Terms we both ratifie the Authority of imposing Forms in the Publick Offices, contrary to our private Opinions. Nor shall we, in either Particular, violate, but comply with, the Duty of our private Stations; and that without involving our selves in the Guilt of the Immoral Petitions, which are Immoral only in them who Assent to them. I beseech our Dear Brethren to consider these Things sedately and impartially, as Lovers of Peace where it is consistent with a good Conscience.

Again

18.
Our Pre-
sence at the
Immoral Pe-
titions will
not oblige
us to an-
swer Amen
to them.

Again I shall intreat them to consider what Ground there is for what you are here pleased to suppose without any Proof at all, that all who are present at the *Immoral Petitions*, are obliged to say *Amen* to them. I here presume that by *Obligation* they mean an *Obligation in Conscience*; no other *Obligation* can excuse from separating from the *Communion*, on Pretence of this *antecedent Obligation* which they fear they should violate if they should *continue* in the *Communion*. I presume further that they mean this *Obligation of Conscience* derived from the *Act of their G-
vernours*, as *intending* to lay this *Obligation* on their *Conscience*, in Pursuance of that

that general Obligation God himself has been pleased to lay upon their *Consciences* to be *subject* to those *Governours* whom himself has *Authorized*, and *obliged* the *Subjects* to *obey* them, as well for *Conscience*, as for *other Considerations*. This is the only Sense in which they can possibly mean this *Obligation* on their *Conscience*, whilst they do, at the same time, believe the *Immoral Petitions* inconsistent with the *Discharge* of a *Good Conscience*, in regard of God immediately, and insist on that *Plea* for their *Separation* from the *Communion* of God's *Authorized Vicegerents*. But how can they prove that even their *Ecclesiastical Governours* intended to *oblige* them to

to answer *Amen* to those *Immoral Petitions*? Yet, if it be not proved, it takes away the whole *Pretence* for *separating* from the *Communion*. For if their *Superiors* never intended to *oblige* them to *signifie* their *Assent* to those particular *Petitions*, they can then pretend no more *Obligation* from their *Subordinate Superiors*, than from *God himself*, in regard of *Conscience*, to *signifie* it. That will leave them at their own *Liberty* to make the *Answer*, though they ought not to take the *Liberty* of *absenting* themselves from the *Communion*. And it is certain that other *Bodies*, wherein things are carried by *Majority of Suffrages*, do not impose their own *Sentiments* on

on over-voted *Dissenters*. On the contrary, they usually *allow* them to keep their *Opinions*, so far as it may be consistent with the *Peace* of the *Community*. Nor do they think it *Seditious*, provided they suffer the *Sense* *contrary* to their *own* *Sense*, to pass for the *Sense* of the *Body*, when it is fairly carried against them by the *Rules* of the *Constitution*. And if it be a *Petition* in the *Name* of the *Body*, its being *presented* to the *Person* to whom it is addressed, is a *Right* *consequent* to the other *Right* it had, to pass for the *Sense* of the *Body* among all *Peaceable*, *Dutiful* *Dissenting* *Members* of the *same* *Body*. This therefore cannot be *hindred*, by even such *Consciencious* *Dissenters*,

K con-

consistently with their *Duty* to the *Body* and the *Government* of it, when the *Rightful Governors* of it are pleased to *insist* upon their *Right* in a Particular of this *Nature*. It will therefore be a *Violation* of their *Duty* to the *Body* to *separate* from the *Communion* for no better a *Reason* than their *private Dissent*; because it cannot be done without Invading *Rights* properly belonging to the *Body* and its *Rightful Government*. But this being first secured, that the *Dissent* be managed with the *Modesty* which becomes their *Subordinate Station*, the *Dissent alone*, with regard to *Conscience*, is not likely to be *blamed* by those whose *Turn it may be to be overruled*

ruled themselves; and therefore by no *Governours* who may themselves be answerable to a *higher Jurisdiction*. Yet such they often are, as has already been observed, who are the *ordinary Introducers* of *Occasional Petitions*. A very *small Number* of the *Rightful Governours*, too *few* to conclude the *Majority* of *Absenters* of their *own Rank* by their *present Votes*. Their *Sense* therefore cannot in *Conscience* be judged the *Sense* of the *Governing Part* of the *Communion*. Nor can it therefore oblige any *Private Communicant* to *assent* to it, on that Account *alone* of his being a *Communicant*. But all *great Bodies* find themselves obliged to bear with

such *insufficient Determinations* for a *time*, till more *decisive ones* may be had, if the *Moment of the thing deserve and require it*. Yet all *Prudent, even sufficient Authorities*, are *unwilling to be understood to confine their Subjects private Sentiments in things Occasional and Temporary*, where the *Freedom of their Thoughts Modestly insisted on*, are *very reconcileable with the great Ends of Government, and with Sincere and Pious Designs for the Publick Good*. Why should we therefore judge otherwise of our *own Spiritual Superiors*, till they be pleased to *declare themselves to the contrary*? Nor is there any *likelihood that they would so declare themselves*,

selves, though our *Laws* had allowed them a greater *Liberty* to do so than we know they have since the Encroachments of *Henry VIII*th, However, till they actually *declare* their Design that every *particular Communicant* should answer *Amen* to the *controvèrted*, as well as to the *other Petitions*, we have no *reason* to insist on a *general Presumption*, that they will do so as a *Cause of leaving the Communion*, because we cannot heartily *assent* to the *Immoral Prayers*. The rather so, because the *Nature* of the thing itself is such as to afford us *better Reason* to *presume* that they *will* never *declare* that they *intend* to *oblige* us to answer *Amen* to

the controverted Petitions. Without this precarious Presumption, we shall not then be able to plead any thing that can make their Communion sinful to us; which if we cannot do we cannot excuse our Separation.

19.
Our Liber-
ty is not
answering
Amen to the
Immoral
Prayers will
not excuse
our Presence
at opposite
Communions,
nor our re-
fusing that
answer to
other Pray-
ers of the
Communion
we profess.

But supposing Presence at such sinful Prayers to be no Argument of Consent to them, you enquire, Why may we not be present at the Romish Mass, or any other corrupt Worship? This Objection would have more Force, if Presence at a Communion did not oblige to a consent to any of the Prayers used in the Communion, if we would act voraciously. But it does not follow, that because Presence at a Communion does argue

argue a Consent to some Prayers in it, therefore it must do so to every particular Prayer used in the Communion, without which you cannot infer that it must argue a Consent to the Prayers concerned in our present Dispute. We must therefore distinguish where this Argument will hold, and where it will not. This will give you a clear Account why I conceive no Consent to those particular Prayers implied in all who are present in the Offices wherein they are used. Presence therefore at the Prayers of any Communion was, by the Catholick Interpretation of this Practice, judged to imply an Approbation at least of the Communion; especially where

A Further Prospect of
the Responses were used to any of the Prayers that were designed to signify the Communicant's Approbation of them. This implied that the Communicant owned himself as one of the Body, in whose Name the Prayers were used by the officiating Ministers, who were appointed to represent the Sense of the Body. And so I also understood our Presence and Assent to the other Prayers to profess and continue our Union and Communion with the Body, wherein the Immoral Prayers were used without consenting to the Prayers themselves, or involving us in the Guilt of them. This Consideration will hinder us from being present at the Prayers of opposite

site Communions, though the Prayers themselves had contained nothing to which we could not heartily consent. So *Prayers with Schismaticks*, as making us one Body, with thole who are divided from the Catholick Church, must also divide us from the same privileged Catholick Communion. So *Prayers with Hereticks*, excommunicated for their Heresie, must make us also one Body with them, and accordingly involve us in the same Excommunication. That is not all, *Prayers with any Body*, when it is a Matter of Design and Choice, may justly be interpreted as an Approbation of the Terms of Communion, as far (at least) as they

they are known to the *Communicant*, without which the officiating *Ministers* could not have admitted him, nor justified their Conduct in admitting him, by the known *Principles* of their *Communion*. And because most *Communions* confine their *Communicants* to the *Catholick Faith, Prayers or Sacraments* in any particular *Communion* must suppose a *Consent* to all those *Particulars* which the *Governours* of the respective *Communions* have *defined* as *Fundamental*. The like may be *presumed* concerning the *Sacraments and Sacramental Offices*, and such *Offices* also wherein all the *Governours* are *agreed*, and wherein all the particular *Communicants* are

are some way concerned, as being of perpetual Use, and immutable by external Circumstances. But there is not the same Reason for Prayers, wherein nothing is concerned that is, even by the Governours of the Communion, imposed as a Condition of Communion; wherein private Facts, and private Persons Rights, and Opinions notoriously disputable, are concerned. These we have no Reason to suspect that Prudent Governours would ever intend for Conditions of their Communion, or that they would therefore expect that they, who are otherwise minded, should signify their Assent by answering Amen to them. They

They know very well that even the *Multitude* of their *present Communicants* are not so *unanimous* in defending these *Prayers*, and the *Principles* concerned in them, as to encourage them ever to make those *Principles* (*Terms* of their *Communion*) which are requisite to justify their *present Practices* and *Prayers* too. Should they venture to do so, they know not how many they should thereby *alienate* of their *best* and most *Conscientious Communicants*. They know withal that we act most agreeably to the *Ancient Doctrines* of our *Church* received in it ever since the *Reformation*, and consequently to all the *Old*

Old Terms of Communion. They cannot therefore make any *Innovation* in the Terms of the Communion, in relation to these Prayers, without a manifest Apostasy from their Principles formerly received by themselves, as has appeared in the *History of Passive Obedience*. And their doing so, is so far from being likely to heal the *Schism*, that it will rather aggravate it with the *new Charge of Heresie*, if they should ever be so disingenious as to *justify* their *Facts*, so disagreeable to the Old Principles of the Church of England, by *new Principles* calculated to serve their *present Purposes*. This would be a Change more *invidious* and *greater* than

than I think we have reason to fear from their *Prudence* as well as their *Good-will* to their *Old Brethren*, who are still their *firmeſt Friends* by *Principles*, so long as they retain any *Veneration* for their *Old Principles*. They cannot easily think it their *Interest*, for *Politicks* of a *temporary Nature*, and which must necessarily have an *End*, either by *Prescription* on the *New*, or by a *Resettlement* on the *Old Foundations*, to make any *change* in their *standing Principles*, which ought to be *perpetual*; especially considering the *Eternal Usefulness* of those same *Old Principles* for recommending them to the *Favour* of any *settled Government*

ment of any Sort, when it comes to be *uncontroverted*. These *Restraints* they have from *Providence*, that may *binder* them from making their Cause *worse* than it *is* by *Innovations* in the Terms of their *Communication*. However, till they *do* so, and do it *expressly*, we have no Reason to make our own Condition *harder* than *needs* by *groundless* and *improbable* Fears. In the mean time we have the Advantage of them, in *interpreting* their *innovated Prayers* proper to *themselves*, by our *Old* and *Common Principles*, received by *both* of us before there were any *temptations to Partiality*. So far as their *Facts* and their *Prin-*

Principles are contradictory, it is impossible to observe them both. If therefore one must over-rule the other, the *Advantage* lyes manifestly on the Side of the *Principles* wherein we are still agreed, and which they have not yet recanted, nor are ever likely to do by a *Consent* so *unanimous*, even among *themselves*, as would be necessary to make an *express Assent* to the controverted *Prayers* a *Condition* of their *Communion*. This is a *Reason* peculiar to these *Prayers*, which may excuse us from *ratifying* them by answering *Amen* to them; but will not be applicable to other *Prayers*, much less to other *Communions*. Nor will it only excuse us.

us. It will shew that we act more agreeably to the *Principles* of the *Communion*, when it shall cease to be *Schismatical*, than either the *Introducers* of the *new Forms*, or the *Assenters* to them. For the *Principles* on which we *refuse* our *Assent*, we shall then have greater *Authority* of our *Communion* itself, than our *Dissenting Brethren* can pretend for the *innovated Prayers*. We can plead the *Authority* of the *whole Body* before the *Schism* of our *Adversaries themselves*, as well as of our *deprived Holy Fathers*. Even *since the Schism*, and *after it*, we can reckon on the *Old Authority*, as continued by our *Adversary Bishops themselves*, till they

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can repeal our Old Principles by a Consent as unanimous of the Bishops for the Time Being, as that was by which our Old Principles were at first Established. Their Practice disagreeable to their Old Principles, can no more be taken for an Authoritative Repeal of them by the Laws of the Society, than the other Faults of Governours, of what Rank soever, can be fairly taken for a Legal Repeal of the Laws received by themselves against their own Immoral Practices. The New Prayers are no more than Immoral Practices, even by the Laws of the Communion, till they can clear themselves of the Principles so inconsistent with them. Nor can they oblige us to an Assent to

to those Prayers as Conditions of our Communion with them till they have first made them *consistent* with the Principles of our Communion.

You further suggest, that ^{20.} *the Purity of the Christian Worship is of as much Concernment to the Honour of God, and the Salvation of Souls, as the Purity of the Christian Faith*; and that *the Bishops of the Catholick Church are as much oblig'd to provide for the Preservation of the one as of the other.* I know no Necessity of entring into the Dispute whether *both* those Duties be *equally* obliging: It is sufficient to grant you that *Bishops* are oblig'd to take Care of *both*, though perhaps not *Equally*. But I take the Design of our present Dis-

Our Dissent
to the Impure
Prayers will
cure us from
the Impurity
of the Worship.

pute to concern our own Duty, not that of our *Holy Fathers*. That they *themselves* are the most competent *Judges* of. And *none* are like to be concerned in the *Case in View*. Then we shall all be *private Communicants*, when we have no *Principles of Unity* to *Head* us as a *Distinct Communion*. And, when we are so, it will be *sufficient* for our *Security* if we can preserve our *selves* from the *Contagion* of the *Immoral Prayers*. And for securing us from that, you need only to recollect what has been already proved. I have shewn the *Communion* itself not chargeable with those *Prayers*, because they are *contrary* to the *Principles* of the *Communion* as a *Distinct Communion*.

nion. Thence it plainly follows that our *communicating* with the *Body* wherein they are *used*, is not alone sufficient to *involve* us in the *Guilt* of them. Thence I proved further, that the *Affent* signified by answering *Amen* to those *Impure Prayers* is the only thing that can *pollute* us: This, as it is against our *Principles*, so it is in our own Power to secure our selves from it. Thus I think I have gone through all the *Difficulties* of your *Objection*; at least so far as I can foresee them. Nor have I any thing more to add, but my heartiest *Prayers*, that *God* will be pleased to make our little *Flock* *numerous* when we come to

Pra-

A Further Prospect of Practice. In this I hope you will be pleased to second me with your more efficacious *Sacerdotal Intercessions*, in which you will vouchsafe particularly to remember the meanest of your Brethren in this Excellent Cause.

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